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TALES FROM THE CRYPT

NO. 29
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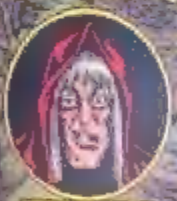
FEATURING

THE CRYPT KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH

THE VAULT KEEPER

FANTASTIC 1950s EC COMICS!

TERROR

TALES FROM THE CRYPT®

NO. 13
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FEATURING...

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

THE OLD WITCH

THE VAULT-KEEPER

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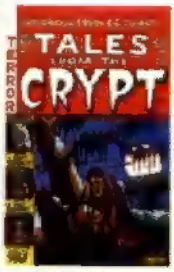
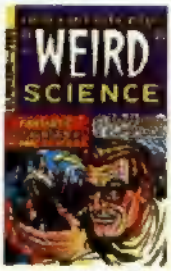


CRYPT #6



W SCI #1

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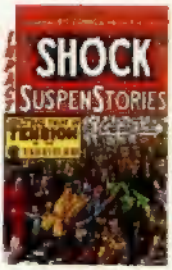

SHOCK #2

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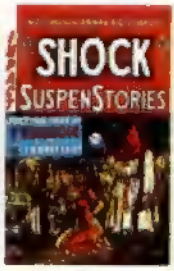

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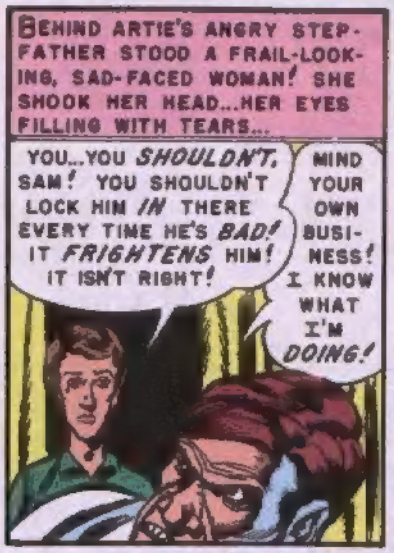
THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! ANOTHER *FEW MONTHS*... ANOTHER *$2.00*... AND ANOTHER *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*, EH, KIDDIES? GLAD TO *SEE* YOU! *COME IN!* COME INTO *THE CRYPT OF TERROR!* THIS IS YOUR *HOST*, THE *CRYPT-KEEPER, SPOOKING!* I'VE CHOSEN A REAL *MEATY TALE OF TERROR* FROM MY COLLECTION TO START OFF MY BOOK! IT'S A *FAVORITE* OF MINE...ONE THAT I'M SURE WILL MAKE YOUR *BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS* AND THE *HAIR ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK CRAWL!* I *CALL* THIS *SHIVERY YARN*...

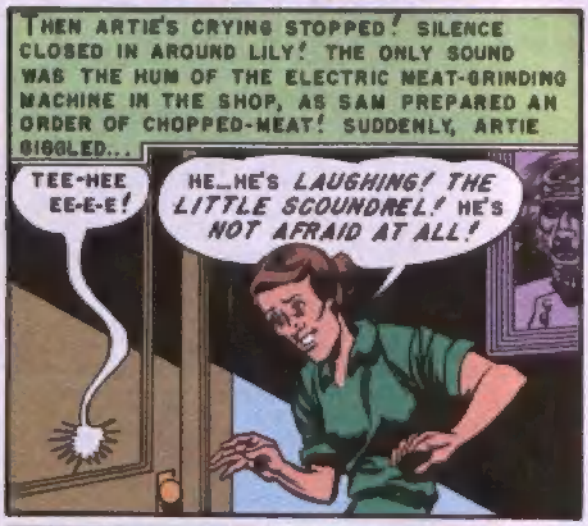
GROUNDS...FOR HORROR!

ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER SLAMMED THE CLOSET DOOR AND TURNED THE KEY! FROM WITHIN CAME THE MUFFLED WAILS OF THE BOY'S PITIFUL CRYING...


BEHIND ARTIE'S ANGRY STEP-FATHER STOOD A FRAIL-LOOKING, SAD-FACED WOMAN! SHE SHOOK HER HEAD...HER EYES FILLING WITH TEARS...
YOU...YOU SHOULDN'T, SAM! YOU SHOULDN'T LOCK HIM IN THERE EVERY TIME HE'S BAD! IT FRIGHTENS HIM! IT ISN'T RIGHT!
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS! I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING!

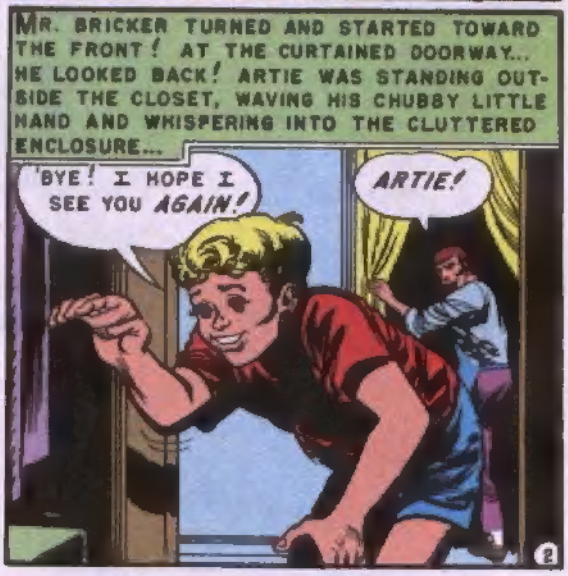
SAMUEL BRICKER TURNED AND STAMPED OUT OF THE TINY APARTMENT, THROUGH A CURTAINED DOORWAY, INTO THE BUTCHER SHOP IN THE FRONT...
HE'S GOT TO LEARN TO OBEY! THE BRAT IS SPOILED! HE NEEDS TO BE DICIPLINED!
BUT LOCKING HIM IN A DARK CLOSET IS TOO HARSH...

SAM NEVER HEARD HIS WIFE'S OBJECTION! HE SWUNG OPEN THE HUGE MEAT-REFRIGERATOR DOOR AND STEPPED INSIDE! IN THE APARTMENT BEHIND THE STORE, LILY BRICKER STARED AT THE LOCKED CLOSET DOOR, LISTENING TO HER SON'S QUIET WHIMPERING...
POOR ARTIE! AND HE'S SO SCARED OF THE DARK!
SOB... SOB...


THEN ARTIE'S CRYING STOPPED! SILENCE CLOSED IN AROUND LILY! THE ONLY SOUND WAS THE HUM OF THE ELECTRIC MEAT-GRINDING MACHINE IN THE SHOP, AS SAM PREPARED AN ORDER OF CHOPPED-MEAT! SUDDENLY, ARTIE GIGGLED...
TEE-HEE EE-E-E!
HE...HE'S LAUGHING! THE LITTLE SCOUNDREL! HE'S NOT AFRAID AT ALL!

LILY SHRUGGED AND RETURNED TO HER HOUSEWORK! FROM TIME TO TIME SHE WOULD STOP AND LISTEN! FROM THE CLOSET, SHE COULD HEAR ARTIE'S MUFFLED WHISPERS AND AN OCCASIONAL CHUCKLE...
LISTEN TO HIM! HE'S TALKING TO HIMSELF! HE'S PLAYING IN THERE!

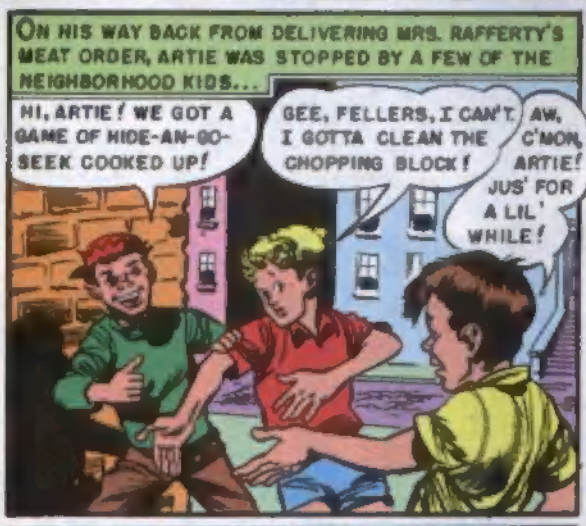
AFTER A WHILE, ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER CAME IN FROM THE SHOP AND UNLOCKED THE DOOR! AS THE LIGHT STREAMED INTO THE CLOSET, CHASING THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE HANGING COATS AND PILED BOXES, ARTIE BLINKED UP! HE SAT IN THE CORNER ON THE FLOOR...SMILING...
ALL RIGHT! GET UP! GET OUT! I HAVE AN ORDER FOR YOU TO DELIVER!
YES, DADDY!


MR. BRICKER TURNED AND STARTED TOWARD THE FRONT! AT THE CURTAINED DOORWAY... HE LOOKED BACK! ARTIE WAS STANDING OUTSIDE THE CLOSET, WAVING HIS CHUBBY LITTLE HAND AND WHISPERING INTO THE CLUTTERED ENCLOSURE...
'BYE! I HOPE I SEE YOU AGAIN!
ARTIE!

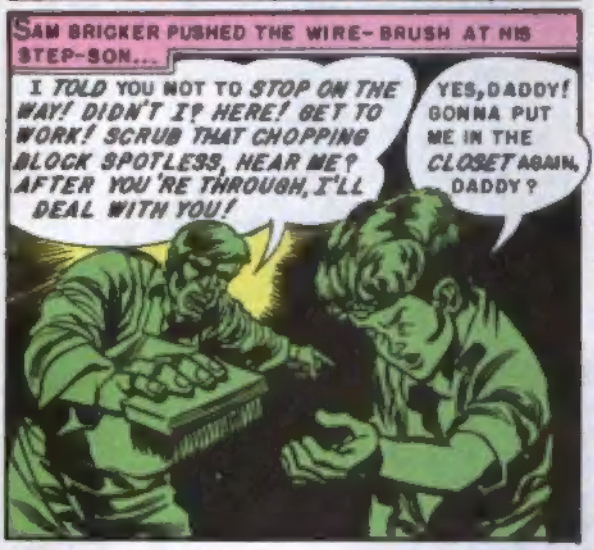
ARTIE MOVED TOWARD HIS STEP-FATHER, HIS CURLY LITTLE EIGHT-YEAR OLD HEAD BOWED! SAM BRICKER GLARED DOWN AT HIM...
WHO IN BLAZES WERE YOU TALKING TO, JUST THEN?
N-NO ONE, DADDY! I WUZ...JUS' PLAYIN'!

WELL, CUT IT OUT! HERE! TAKE THIS ORDER OVER TO MRS. RAFFERTY...AND DON'T STOP TO TALK TO THE OTHER BRATS ON THE WAY!
YES, DADDY!

ARTIE CURLED HIS ARM AROUND THE SPONGY SOFT BAG OF MEAT, AND SKIPPED OUT THE DOOR! HIS STEP-FATHER SHOUTED AFTER HIM...
YOU'VE GOT TO CLEAN THE CHOPPING BLOCK WHEN YOU GET BACK, SO HURRY UP!
YES, DADDY!


ON HIS WAY BACK FROM DELIVERING MRS. RAFFERTY'S MEAT ORDER, ARTIE WAS STOPPED BY A FEW OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS...
HI, ARTIE! WE GOT A GAME OF HIDE-AN-GO-SEEK COOKED UP!
GEE, FELLERS, I CAN'T. I GOTTA CLEAN THE CHOPPING BLOCK!
AW, C'MON, ARTIE! JUS' FOR A LIL' WHILE!

IT WAS GETTING DARK WHEN ARTIE RETURNED TO THE BUTCHER SHOP! AS HE SHEEPISHLY ENTERED THE DOOR, HIS STEP-FATHER EXPLODED...
WHERE WERE YOU? YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR OVER AN HOUR! YOU STOPPED TO PLAY, DIDN'T YOU? DIDN'T YOU?
YES, DADDY! THE KIDS ASKED...


SAM BRICKER PUSHED THE WIRE-BRUSH AT HIS STEP-SON...
I TOLD YOU NOT TO STOP ON THE WAY! DIDN'T I? HERE! GET TO WORK! SCRUB THAT CHOPPING BLOCK SPOTLESS, HEAR ME? AFTER YOU'RE THROUGH, I'LL DEAL WITH YOU!
YES, DADDY! GONNA PUT ME IN THE CLOSET AGAIN, DADDY?

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M GOING TO DO! YOU'LL LEARN TO BE OBEDIENT YET, YOUNG MAN!
YES, DADDY!

YOU KNOW WHAT A BUTCHER'S CHOPPING BLOCK IS, DON'T YOU? IT'S THAT LITTLE TABLE ABOUT THREE FEET SQUARE AND A FOOT OR SO THICK THAT THEY CHOP THE MEAT ON! AFTER A BUSY DAY, IT'S PRETTY MESSY! THE WAY THEY CLEAN IT IS TO SCRAPE THE BLOOD STAINS AND IMBEDDED MEAT WITH A WIRE BRUSH UNTIL ALL TRACES ARE GONE! IT'S A TOUGH JOB FOR A MAN, LET ALONE AN EIGHT-YEAR OLD!
AFTER AN HOUR OR MORE, ARTIE FINALLY FINISHED THE BACK-BREAKING TASK OF SCRUBBING THE BLOCK, AND ENTERED THE APARTMENT BREATHLESS...
I'M FINISHED, DADDY! ARE YOU GOING TO PUT ME IN THE CLOSET, NOW?
THAT'S RIGHT! AND WITHOUT SUPPER, TOO!
OKAY, DADDY!
SAM!
YOU KEEP OUT OF THIS, MARTHA!
ARTIE OPENED THE CLOSET AND STEPPED IN! HE SANK DOWN UNTIL HE SAT CROSS-LEGGED ON THE CLUTTERED FLOOR! HE SMILED UP AT HIS STEP-FATHER...
I'M READY, DADDY!
NEXT TIME YOU'LL LISTEN TO ME WHEN I TELL YOU SOMETHING!
SAM! PLEASE! HE'S A GROWING BOY! HE NEEDS HIS MEALS!
MR. BRICKER SLAMMED THE DOOR! THERE WAS NO SOUND IN THE TINY APARTMENT BEHIND THE BUTCHER SHOP! HE TURNED THE KEY! STILL NO SOUND! ARTIE'S MOTHER GASPED...
HE...HE DIDN'T CRY! HE... HE SEEMED TO WANT TO BE LOCKED IN!
THE KID'S CRAZY!
THEY LISTENED FOR A MOMENT! ARTIE WAS WHISPERING TO HIMSELF BEHIND THE LOCKED DOOR! THEN HE GIGGLED...
SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE, SAM BRICKER? SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE? LISTEN TO HIM! HE TALKS TO HIMSELF! HE LAUGHS IN THERE! SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH YOUR... PUNISHMENTS?
BAH! HE'S PUTTING ON AN ACT! HE'S TRYING TO KID US! HE'S SCARED STIFF!
SAM STARED OUT THROUGH THE CURTAINED DOORWAY...
I'M GOIN' OVER TO ED'S TO PLAY CARDS! YOU CAN LET 'IM OUT AFTER A WHILE! BUT REMEMBER WHAT I SAID! NO SUPPER!
YES, SAM!

LILY LISTENED FOR THE TINKLE OF THE BELL AS SAM WENT OUT THROUGH THE BUTCHER SHOP! THEN SHE TURNED TO THE CLOSET! INSIDE, ARTIE WAS STILL CHATTERING AWAY IN LOW TONES! LILY TRIED TO MAKE OUT WHAT HE WAS SAYING...
GEE...NO! NOT THAT! UH...UH! GEE! HE ISN'T...THAT BAD! HUH? OH, THAT'D BE OKAY...I GUESS!
ARTHUR?

ARTIE GASPED! THEN HE HUSHED HIS IMAGINARY PLAYMATE! HIS MOTHER UNLOCKED THE CLOSET DOOR AND SWUNG IT OPEN! ARTIE SAT CROSS-LEGGED ON THE FLOOR GRINNING UP AT HER SHYLY...
Y...YES, MOTHER!
YOU...YOU MUST BE HUNGRY, DEAR! COME OUT! I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!

ARTIE PEERED OUT OF THE CLOSET...ABOUT THE TINY APARTMENT...
IS HE... DADDY... AROUND?
NO! HE'S GONE! BUT YOU'RE NOT TO TELL HIM I FED YOU...UNDERSTAND?

LILY PLACED THE GLASS OF MILK AND JAM-COVERED BREAD BEFORE HER SMALL SON! SHE SAT DOWN OPPOSITE HIM... STUDYING HIS FACE AS HE GULPED HIS FOOD...
ARTIE! WHO DO YOU TALK TO IN THE CLOSET?
HUH? OH! YOU HEARD?

YES! WHO IS IT? SOMEONE YOU MADE UP?
UH...UH! NOPE! HE'S REAL! HE LIVES THERE... IN THE CLOSET!

REAL? NOW, ARTIE! ISN'T HE JUST IN YOUR IMAGINATION?
UH...UH! NOPE! HE WANTS TO PUNISH DADDY FOR PUNISHING ME! HOZIR LIKES ME!

WHAT'S HIS NAME?
HOZIR! HE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING TERRIBLE TO DADDY! I WOULDN'T LET HIM!

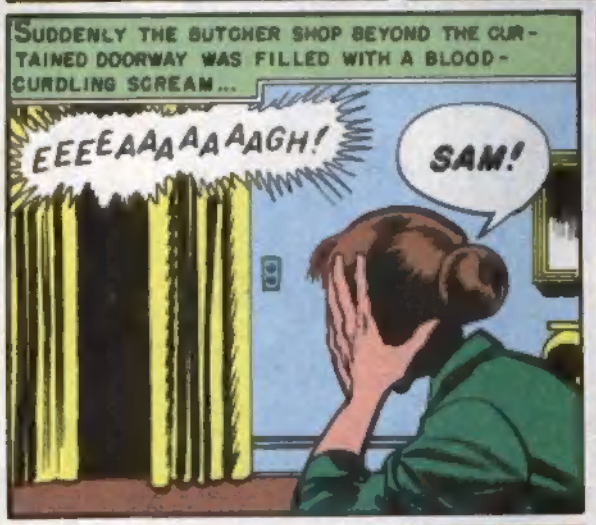
ARTIE! MY BABY!
BUT I SAID IT'S OKAY IF HE PUSHES DADDY SO'S HE FALLS DOWN AN' HURTS HIMSELF A LITTLE! THAT'S OKAY, ISN'T IT, MOMMY?

LILY STARED AT HER SON...HER EYES FILLING WITH TEARS! POOR ARTIE! SAM HAD HURT HIM BY LOCKING HIM IN THE CLOSET...HURT HIM BADLY! SUDDENLY, THE TINKLE OF THE STORE BELL STARTLED HER! SHE JUMPED UP...
IT'S YOUR FATHER! IF HE CATCHES ME FEEDING YOU...
GOLLY... GEE!
SAM BECKER STRODE ACROSS THE SAWDUST-COVERED BUTCHER SHOP FLOOR! AS HE CAME THROUGH THE CURTAINED DOORWAY...
LILY! I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU...
SUDDENLY, SAM SPRAWLED FORWARD, SKIDDING ON HIS FACE...
SAM!
EEOOOWWW!
GOLLY... GEE!
ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER GOT TO HIS KNEES, CURSING...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SAM? ARE YOU HURT?
SOMEBODY PUSHED ME! I FELT IT! I FELT A PAIR OF HANDS SHOVE ME!
NOZIR!
LILY STARED IN HORROR AT THE MISCHIEVOUS LOOK ON HER YOUNG SON'S FACE...
HUH? WHAT'D THE KID SAY, LIL?
NOTHING, SAM! NOTHING AT ALL!
ARTIE GRINNED! SAM CAUGHT HIS STEP-SON'S EXPRESSION...
WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? WHAT'S SO FUNNY? YOU'RE GLAD I FELL... AREN'T YOU?
UH...HUH!
ARTIE! SAM! STOP IT!
ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER GRABBED HIS SON BY HIS SHIRT COLLAR AND SHOVED HIM INTO THE CLOSET...
GET IN THERE, YOU LITTLE BRAT! I'LL TEACH YOU TO LAUGH...
SAM! NO! DON'T PUT HIM IN THERE! PLEASE!

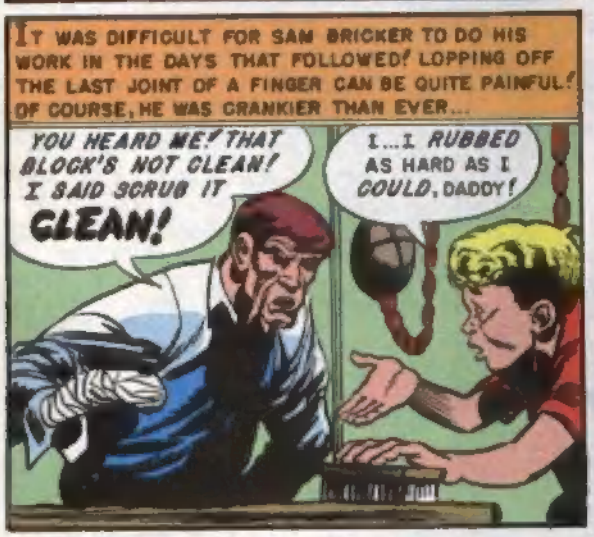
SAM SPUN AROUND, GLARING AT HIS WIFE...
YOU SHUT UP! I'LL HANDLE THIS MY WAY!
PLEASE, SAM! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

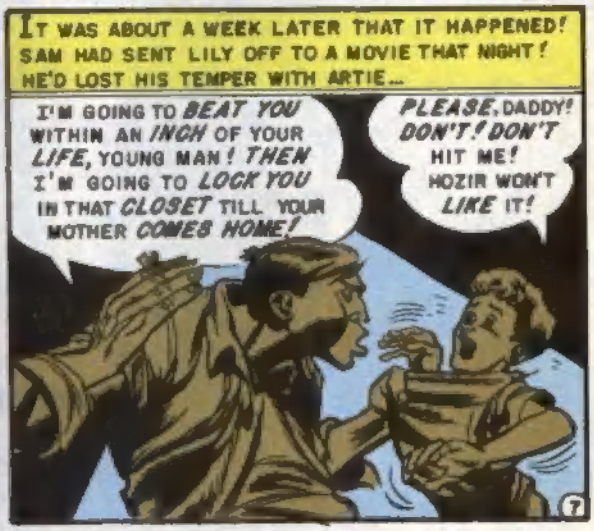
SAM STRODE INTO THE SHOP AND FLUNG OPEN THE MEAT-REFRIGERATOR DOOR...
YOU LEAVE HIM IN THERE, LILY! I'M GOING TO SLICE UP A SIDE OF BEEF FOR TOMORROW...
YES, SAM!

LILY LISTENED FOR THE WHIR OF THE SLICING MACHINE! FINALLY IT STARTED! SHE EDGED TOWARD THE CLOSET... LISTENING...
UH-UH! NOPE! NOT THAT! THAT'S TOO TERRIBLE! HUH? HIS FINGER? OKAY!
ARTIE! (GASP!)


SUDDENLY THE BUTCHER SHOP BEYOND THE CURTAINED DOORWAY WAS FILLED WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM...
EEEEAAAAAAGH!
SAM!

LILY DARTED ACROSS THE APARTMENT, THROUGH THE SHOP, AND INTO THE REFRIGERATOR! SAM STOOD HOWLING BEFORE THE WHIRRING SLICING MACHINE... A HANDKERCHIEF CLUTCHED AROUND ONE HAND...
SAM! WHAT HAPPENED?
GET ME A DOCTOR, LILY! QUICKLY! I...I CUT OFF THE TIP OF MY FINGER!


IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR SAM BRICKER TO DO HIS WORK IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED! LOPPING OFF THE LAST JOINT OF A FINGER CAN BE QUITE PAINFUL! OF COURSE, HE WAS CRANKIER THAN EVER...
YOU HEARD ME! THAT BLOCK'S NOT CLEAN! I SAID SCRUB IT CLEAN!
I...I RUBBED AS HARD AS I COULD, DADDY!


IT WAS ABOUT A WEEK LATER THAT IT HAPPENED! SAM HAD SENT LILY OFF TO A MOVIE THAT NIGHT! HE'D LOST HIS TEMPER WITH ARTIE...
I'M GOING TO BEAT YOU WITHIN AN INCH OF YOUR LIFE, YOUNG MAN! THEN I'M GOING TO LOCK YOU IN THAT CLOSET TILL YOUR MOTHER COMES HOME!
PLEASE, DADDY! DON'T! DON'T HIT ME! HOZIR WON'T LIKE IT!

WHEN LILY CAME HOME LATE THAT NIGHT, AS SHE OPENED THE SHOP DOOR, SHE HEARD ARTIE CRYING HYSTERICALLY IN THE CLOSET...

ARTIE! MY BABY! MY BABY!

SHE RAN TO THE CLOSET AND OPENED IT! ARTIE LOOKED UP AT HER WITH TEAR-FILLED RED EYES.

I TRIED TO STOP HOZIR... SOB... SOB! HE WOULDN'T LISTEN!

WHAT HAPPENED, DARLING?

DADDY HIT ME! IT MADE HOZIR ANGRY! HOZIR SAID HE'D DO IT THIS TIME! I COULDN'T STOP HIM!

DO WHAT? TELL ME!

SUDDENLY LILY HEARD THE HUMMING... THE HUMMING OF A MOTOR...

HOZIR SAID... SOB... SAID HE WAS GOING TO DO THE TERRIBLE THING! AND THEN I HEARD DADDY SCREAMING!

ARTIE! WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

IT'S THE MEAT-GRINDER, MOMMY! HOZIR PUT DADDY IN THE MEAT GRINDER!

GOOD LORD!

LILY RUSHED TO THE MEAT-REFRIGERATOR! THE MEAT-GRINDER WAS ON... AND HUMMING! BELOW IT, ON THE FROSTY FLOOR, WAS A HUGE PILE OF RAW CHOP-MEAT...

EEEEEEEEEEEEE!

I... I... TRIED TO STOP HIM, MOMMY! HOZIR WAS ANGRY... AWFUL ANGRY!

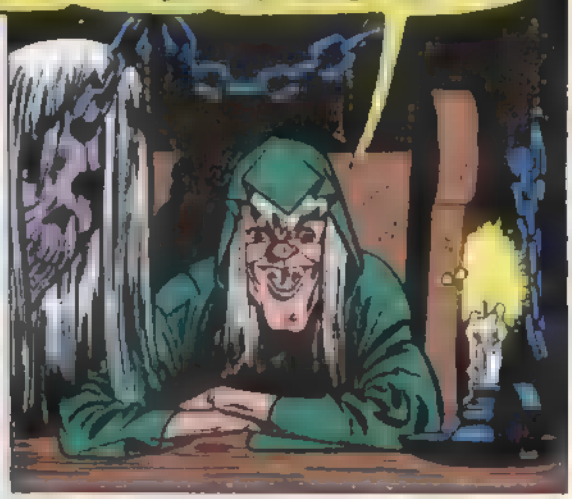
HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDIES! THAT'S THE STORY! HOZIR MADE MINCE-MEAT OUT OF ARTIE'S STEP-DADDY! WELL! HE WASN'T MUCH GOOD, ANYWAY! HE ONLY MARRIED LILY TO GET THE DOUGH TO OPEN THE BUTCHER SHOP! THE DOUGH THAT ARTIE'S REAL DADDY LEFT THEM! OF COURSE, SAM NEVER INTENDED TO END UP SO... SO INVOLVED IN HIS WORK! BY THE WAY! NEXT TIME YOU EAT A HAMBURGER, DON'T LOOK TOO HARD! YOU MIGHT FIND A GOLD TOOTH IN IT... SAM'S! AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE VAULT-KEEPER! SEE YOU LATER!

MINCE MEAT

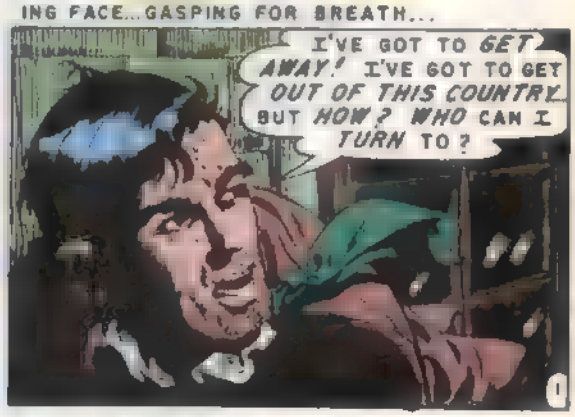
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S YOUR OLD FIEND, *THE VAULT-KEEPER*, SHRIEKING! I SEE MY HOST, C.K., HAS FINISHED HIS...YOU SHOULD PARDON THE EXPRESSION...*'HORROR'* STORY, AND NOW IT'S *MY* TURN! WELL, I'M READY! ARE YOU? GOT THE *SMELLING SALTS* HANDY? GOOD! YOU'LL *NEED* THEM BEFORE YOU'RE THROUGH WITH *THIS SPINE-TINGLER* I CALL...

A ROTTIN' TRICK!



CLINT ASHTON MADE HIS WAY NERVOUSLY DOWN THE DARK WINDING STREET OF THE LITTLE GREEK SEAPORT TOWN! FROM TIME TO TIME, HE WOULD STOP IN THE SHADOWS OF A DOORWAY...LISTENING FOR THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HIM! HE WAS BEING FOLLOWED...HE KNEW THAT! THEY'D TRAILED HIM TO THE WATERFRONT AREA...THEY WERE HOT ON HIS HEELS! HE WIPED HIS PERSPIRING FACE...GASPING FOR BREATH...



AND THEN HE REMEMBERED *NICK!* ESSIE HAD TOLD HIM NICK WAS A FISHERMAN! NICK HAD A *BOAT!* NICK COULD HELP HIM! CLINT DARTED ACROSS THE ROAD THAT RAN BESIDE THE WHARVES...

NICK! THAT'S IT! HE COULD GET ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY *BY BOAT!*

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS CLACKED OVER THE COBBLESTONES BEHIND ASHTON! THEY WERE GETTING CLOSER, NOW! HE HAD TO HIDE! LATER, IF THEY DIDN'T FIND HIM, HE'D *LOOK* FOR NICK...

THERE'S A *SKIFF* TIED UP DOWN THERE WITH A *TARPAULIN* ROLLED UP! I'LL *HIDE THERE!*

CLINT SWUNG HIMSELF OVER THE EDGE OF THE WHARF AND DROPPED INTO THE SKIFF AS NOISELESSLY AS HE COULD! HE UNFURLED THE CANVAS AND, CURLING HIMSELF UP IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT, COVERED HIMSELF WITH IT...

LORD! I'M TIRED! BEEN RUNNING FOR TWO DAYS! GOT TO LIE STILL NOW...CAN'T ATTRACT ATTENTION!

CLINT HELD HIS BREATH AS THE VOICES AND FOOTSTEPS DREW NEAR! HE COULD HEAR THEM HESITATE OVERHEAD ON THE WHARF, TALKING TO EACH OTHER IN LOW TONES! A FLASH OF LIGHT STREAMED IN THROUGH A TINY HOLE IN THE TARPAULIN, AND CLINT KNEW THEY WERE COVERING THE PIER AND ITS BOATS WITH A FLASHLIGHT...

THEY'D KILL ME ON SIGHT IF THEY SPOTTED ME!

THEN THE VOICES AND THE FOOTSTEPS DIED AWAY, AND CLINT BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF! SOON ONLY THE LAPPING OF THE WATER AND THE CREAKING OF THE PILINGS COULD BE HEARD! CLINT THREW BACK THE CANVAS AND LOOKED UP AT THE STARRY SKY...

NICK'S MY ONLY HOPE! HE'S THE *ONLY ONE* I CAN *TURN TO!* I WONDER... I WONDER IF HE *STILL HATES ME...* OVER WHAT HAPPENED TO *ESSIE?*

CLINT LOOKED AT HIS WATCH! IT WAS THREE-THIRTY! SOON IT WOULD BE GETTING LIGHT AND THE FISHERMEN WOULD BE COMING DOWN TO THEIR BOATS! HE'D LOOK FOR NICK THEN! CLINT LIT A CIGARETTE AND BEGAN PUFFING IT! HE LAY BACK, HIS HEAD ON THE SKIFF'S STERN-SEAT, AND SMILED...

SHE WAS *ALL RIGHT... ESSIE! REAL GORGEOUS BABE!* YEAH... I *LIKED* THAT DOLL!

CLINT'D MET ESSIE RIGHT THERE IN THAT SEACOAST TOWN ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO! HE'D HIRED A TOURING CAR IN ATHENS AND COME DOWN THE COAST LOOKING FOR A LITTLE RELAXATION! HE'D MADE HIS ROUNDS OF THE WATERFRONT JOINTS AND THEN HE'D SEEN HER! THE CHEAP TWO-BIT BAND HAD ALMOST DROWNED OUT HER VOICE...BUT THE SPOTLIGHT'D REVEALED ALL THAT CLINT'D BEEN INTERESTED IN...

SSST! WAITER! WILL YOU GIVE THIS NOTE TO THAT YOUNG LADY WHO'S SINGING?

YES, SIR! SOON AS SHE'S THROUGH!

AFTER HER SONG, ESSIE'D COME TO CLINT'S TABLE...

I... I RECEIVED YOUR NOTE!

SO I SEE! WON'T YOU... SIT DOWN?

EVEN IN THAT SMOKE-FILLED DIVE, ESSIE'D LOOKED LIKE A HOLLYWOOD MOVIE STAR...

YOU'RE AN *AMERICAN*, AREN'T YOU?

YES! IS MY GREEK *THAT BAD?*

NO! YOU SPEAK IT QUITE *WELL!* IT IS YOUR *CLOTHES! THAT* IS HOW I CAN *TELL!*

YOU'RE A CLEVER GIRL, MISS... MISS... ER... WHAT *IS* YOUR NAME?

IT IS A VERY LONG, VERY HARD NAME TO PRONOUNCE! BUT YOU CAN CALL ME *ESSIE!*

MY NAME'S CLINTON ASHTON! CALL ME *CLINT!* WOULD YOU HAVE LUNCH WITH ME TOMORROW, ESSIE?

I... I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T THINK SO! IF *NICK* WERE TO FIND OUT...

NICK? WHO'S NICK? DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE MARRIED?

NOT AS YET! NICK AND I ARE *ENGAGED!* WE ARE TO BE MARRIED AS SOON AS HE HAS PAID OFF THE BOAT!

THE BOAT? OH! YOUR BOYFRIEND'S A FISHERMAN?

YES! AND VERY JEALOUS! HE HAS INSISTED THAT SOON AS WE ARE MARRIED, I STOP WORKING!

BUT YOU'RE NOT MARRIED YET, ESSIE! I STILL HAVE A CHANCE!

THAT NIGHT, CLINT'D CHECKED IN AT THE TOWN'S ONLY HOTEL! AS HE'D UNDRESSED FOR BED...

SHE'S A CUTE BABE! *THIS* IS GOING TO BE FUN!

THAT'S THE WAY CLINTON ASHTON HAD ALWAYS BEEN! WITH THE INHERITANCE HE'D GOTTEN FROM HIS WEALTHY FATHER, CLINT'D TAKEN TO TRAVELING AROUND THE WORLD... MAKING 'CONQUESTS'! ESSIE WAS TO BE JUST ANOTHER NAME ON HIS ALREADY LENGTHY LIST! THE NEXT DAY...

ESSIE! SO YOU DID COME!

YES! I KNOW I *SHOULDN'T* HAVE, *BUT*...

CLINT'D TAKEN HER HAND...

YOU COULDN'T *HELP* IT! *COULD* YOU? LAST NIGHT SOMETHING *HAPPENED*... BETWEEN YOU AND I... SOMETHING *WONDERFUL!*

PLEASE CLINT! PEOPLE ARE *WATCHING!*

THEY'D GONE FOR A DRIVE, HE AND ESSIE! THEY'D DRIVEN OUT OF TOWN AND UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS WHERE THEY'D BE SAFE FROM PRYING EYES...

P-PLEASE, CLINT! I HARDLY KNOW YOU! *PLEASE!*

YOU KNOW ALL THERE *IS* TO KNOW, ESSIE! YOU KNOW THAT I *LOVE YOU!* LET'S NOT FIGHT IT!

IT'D BEEN AS EASY AS THAT! CLINT HAD A WAY WITH WOMEN! HE KNEW IT! IN FACT, ESSIE'D BEEN A PUSHOVER! BUT SHE'D BEEN PRETTIER THAN MOST, SO CLINT'D HUNG AROUND LONGER THAN USUAL! THEN ONE DAY, COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN FROM ONE OF THEIR DAILY DRIVES

THE BRAKES! THEY WON'T HOLD! THE CAR'S OUT OF CONTROL!

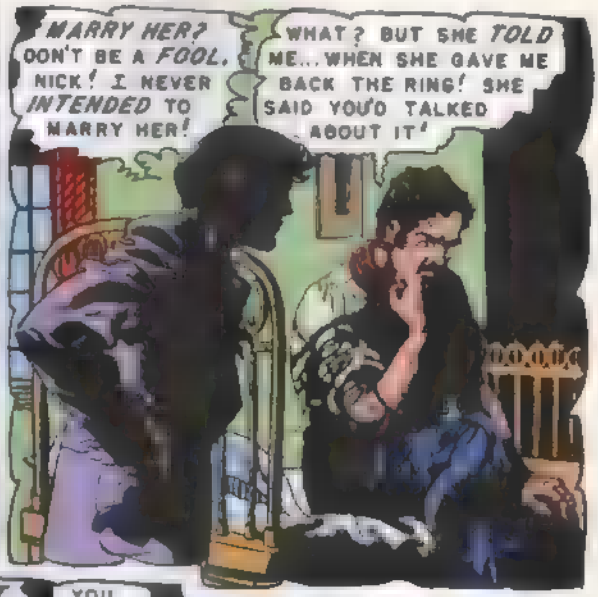
EEEEEEEEEE!

JUST BEFORE THE CAREENING CAR PLUNGED OVER THE EMBANKMENT, CLINT'D JUMPED CLEAR! ESSIE WENT DOWN WITH THE CAR, SPINNING OVER AND OVER...

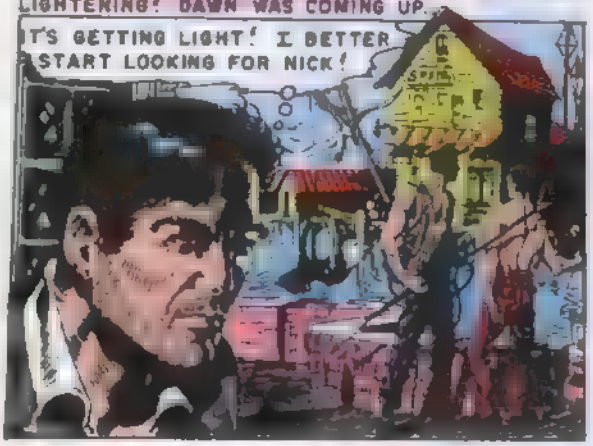
SHE'D BEEN BADLY HURT! CLINT'D GOTTEN AWAY WITH A FEW SCRATCHES! THAT NIGHT, CLINT'D MET NICK FOR THE FIRST TIME! HE'D COME TO CLINT'S HOTEL ROOM...

LOOK, NICK! I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ESSIE! I TRIED TO STOP! THE BRAKES.

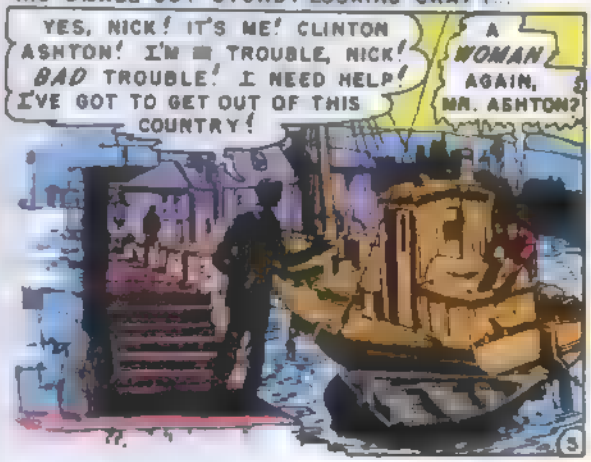
SHE... SHE WILL BE *DISFIGURED FOR LIFE*, MR. ASHTON! HER FACE... HAS BEEN... SOB... SOB...



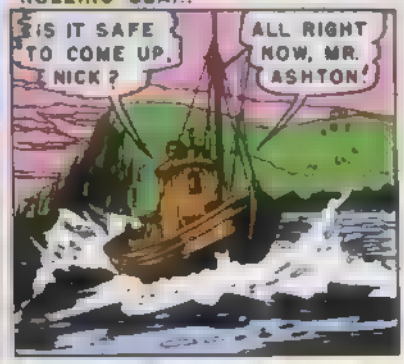
THAT'S WHAT'D HAPPENED! CLINT'D HOPPED A TRAIN NORTH...OUT OF ESSIE'S AND NICK'S LIVES! NOW, CLINT WONDERED WHAT NICK WOULD SAY WHEN THEY'D MEET! OVERHEAD, THE SKY WAS LIGHTENING! DAWN WAS COMING UP...



CLINT COMBED THE WATERFRONT SEARCHING THE SLEEPY FACES FOR NICK! FINALLY HE SPOTTED HIM, WORKING OVER THE ENGINE OF HIS SMALL BUT STURDY-LOOKING CRAFT...

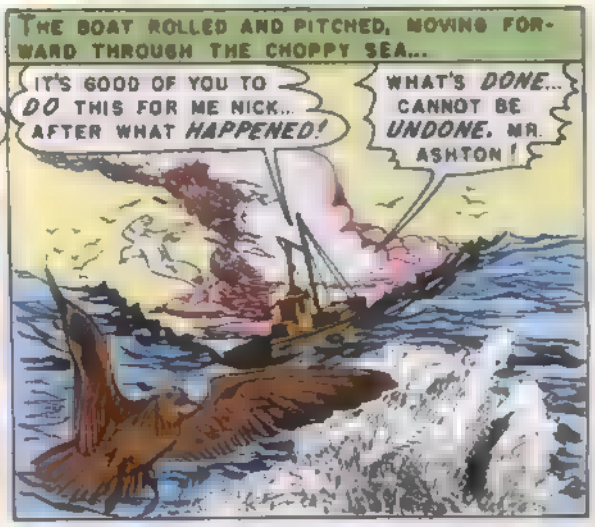


SOON THE LITTLE FISHING VESSEL'S ENGINE BEGAN TO SPUTTER, THEN HUM REASSURINGLY! BELOW DECK, CLINT FELT THE CRAFT BEGIN TO MOVE AWAY FROM ITS WHARF AND OUT INTO THE ROLLING SEA...



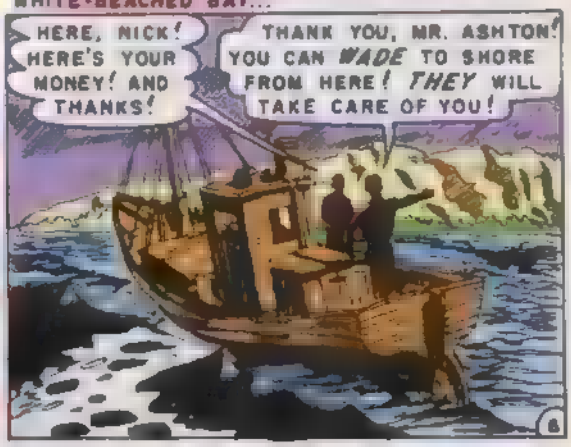
CLINT LOOKED BACK AT THE RECEDING GREEK MAINLAND...

THE BOAT ROLLED AND PITCHED, MOVING FORWARD THROUGH THE CHOPPY SEA...



THEY SAILED IN SILENCE ACROSS THE TOSSING BLUE WATER! SOON A SMALL ISLAND ROSE LIKE A SPECK ON THE HORIZON, GROWING STEADILY LARGER...

CLINT PRESSED THE THOUSAND LIRA INTO NICK'S HAND AS THE BOAT SKIRTED THE ISLAND'S SHORE-LINE AND ENTERED A SMALL WHITE-BEACHED BAY...



CLINT SLIPPED OVER THE SIDE OF NICK'S BOAT! NICK WAS RIGHT! THE WATER WAS WAIST-HIGH! CLINT STARTED TO WADE TOWARD THE WHITE BEACH...

OH, BY THE WAY, NICK! I FORGOT TO ASK YOU...

YES, MR. ASHTON?

NICK'S BOAT BEGAN TO DRIFT...

HOW'S ESSIE?

ESSIE?

THE GAP BETWEEN THEM WIDENED...

YES! HOW *IS* SHE! YOU TWO EVER GET *MARRIED*?

NO, MR. ASHTON!

CLINT WAS NEARING THE BEACH! THEY HAD TO SHOUT TO HEAR EACH OTHER...

GEE, THAT'S *TOO BAD*, NICK! *WHY NOT*!

BECAUSE SHE *KILLED HERSELF*, MR. ASHTON!

CLINT SPUN AROUND! NICK HAD STARTED THE ENGINE! THE SMALL BOAT WAS TURNING AND HEADING FOR THE OPEN SEA...

NICK! NICK! WHEN WILL YOU COME BACK FOR ME?

NEVER... MR. ASHTON!

CLINT STOOD THERE ON THE WHITE SAND, WATCHING THE BOAT DISAPPEAR OVER THE HORIZON! THEN HE TURNED! TWO PASTY-FACED MEN STOOD BEFORE HIM! ONE OF THEM EXTENDED A LUMPY HAND! NICK TOOK IT AND THEY SHOOK HANDS WARMLY...

WELCOME, MY FRIEND! *WELCOME* TO THE *ISLAND OF SIRBA!*

HELLO! MY NAME'S...CLINT... UH...*WHAT DID YOU SAY?*

COME, EVERYBODY! WE HAVE A *NEW ADDITION* TO OUR *SOCIETY!*

THEY CAME FROM BEHIND THE TREES AND BRUSH THAT BORDERED THE WHITE BEACH! THEY CAME WITH THEIR FESTERING SORES, THEIR ASH-WHITE SKIN, THEIR BLOATED FEATURES! THEY GATHERED AROUND CLINT... TOUCHING HIM, EXAMINING HIM CURIOUSLY! HORRIBLY DISTORTED REMAINS OF HUMANITY...GRINNING...GURGLING! SOME BLIND... SOME WITH FINGERS GONE...LEGS WITHERED AWAY... ARMS ROTTED OFF! THEY *WELCOMED* HIM...

WELCOME TO SIRBA!

WELCOME!

SIRBA! GOOD LORD! THIS IS THE LEPER COLONY!

HEH, HEH! AND THERE'S *NO GETTING AWAY* FROM IT EITHER, CLINT! THAT'S WHY *NICK* SAID HE'S *NEVER COMING BACK* FOR YOU! *YOU GOT IT, KID... LEPROSY*, THAT IS! SURE! DIDN'T YOU SHAKE *HANDS* WITH 'EM? DIDN'T THEY *TOUCH* YOU? COME, COME, CLINT! NO USE *GOING TO PIECES* RIGHT AWAY! YOU *WILL*... IN DUE TIME, ANYWAY! AND NOW, KIDDIES, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO *THE CRYPT-KEEPER!* 'BYE! SEE YOU *NEXT* IN MY OWN MAG, *THE VAULT OF HORROR!*

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I really like the story in CRYPT #11, "Well-Cooked Hams!" I guess what goes around comes around

Orlando Garcia — 1729 W Superior, Chicago, IL 60622

Especially on a rotisserie! —CK

In CRYPT #10 you made a mistake. Under your "IAHF" column you said I was from Texas! Caught you!

CRYPT #10 was a good issue. "Bargain [illegible] Death!" was an excellent story. Said it all. "Ants [illegible] her Trance!" was pretty boring and the worst story [illegible] the book. "A-Corny Story" wasn't that good. No offense, but you can do better. "The Ventriloquist's Dummy!" was a good story. I really liked the end.

John Brown — Harriman, TN

I like what you look like on the show better than [illegible] the comic. I like dead zombies better than living people. How come the Old Witch looks the oldest?

James Franco — Agawam, MA

That's what I need—leading questions! —CK

Once or twice on your show, you referred to your pet, named Scab. What exactly is Scab? And how might I one day become an accomplished GhouLunatic, like you? Your willing minion of the darkness.

James Farr, age 15 — Owasso, OK

Scab is a crusty lil' devil, hired during the extras' strike. —CK

Though I'm not a fan of comics, I love all the ECs (except WEIRD SCIENCE and FANTASY). In France, it is very difficult [illegible] find some [illegible] it, or they cost too much. [illegible] addition, we cannot [get back issues].

I have known "Tales from the Crypt" by the TV show, but today I prefer the comics. I'm a new fan, tell me how I can [get] your [comics]. Does a catalogue exist?

To the Crypt-Keeper: You are bad, very bad, and I love it! [You] are better than "Asterix & Obelix." I love your concept.

David Giles — Montreuil, FRANCE

All back issues are available, check the end of the column. Order lots at once and minimize shipping costs. Better than "Asterix"? Wow! —CK

What comic book is Demon Knight in? Do you know anything about a fan club? What comic book is "Split Personality" in?

Now I want to tell you about my finger nails. I paint them black in honor of you. I also have blood red lipstick.

Teagan Prieto — Cowpens, SC

Demon Knight is in no original EC comic. They made him up! "Split Personality!" is in VAULT #30 (will be our #19). (Blood red lipstick is better than lips sticky with red blood—or is it?) —CK

I am writing because in your last issue there was a letter from someone using my name. I was not amused. I have disposed of the impostor. Anyone else who attempts it will suffer the same fate. There is only one Demon of the Dark, and it's me!

Dark Demon — address unknown

Who is the Dark Demon? [illegible] he some kind of EC joke?! Please print my address.

Pete Annelli, age 10 — 10 Lambert ST, Washington, NJ 07882

We're not sure who he is, but we figger he's not to be messed with! —CK

I've been collecting all the EC horror comic books and I have exactly 40 issues. I've also looked through other comic books, some lesser-known titles by DC and other stuff, but nothing else has quite the unique, original, creative, eye-catching, innovative writing or art styles as EC. EC has got to be the most worthwhile, entertaining, get-all-your-money's-worth comic around.

Audrey Sheehan — address unknown

1) Did Berni Wrightson draw some stories for EC? 2) Who's the creator of The Crypt-Keeper?

Marc Gras I Cots — Barcelona, SPAIN

EC predates Wrightson by [illegible] years, but Berni's work owes much to Ingels' EC stuff. I guess I'm 50% Gaines, 50% Feldstein—and all-boy! —CK

MORE HBO STUFF

Thanks to David Lowery II for shedding some light on this whole "Abra Cadaver" mystery. And I have to agree with Chad Kushkins. "You, Murderer" was totally slammin'! Also if anyone wants to buy some "Crypt" cards, I've got quite a few packs, so get [illegible] touch with me.

Was HBO's "The Man Who Was Death" based on "A Shocking Way to Die!" [illegible] CRYPT #5?

Please continue to print my address, and [illegible] anyone out there wants to buy some cards, or just to hang out via mail, write [illegible] me

Myron James — RR 4 BX 141, Rockville, IN 47872

We've seen only one HBO episode ("The Reluctant Vampire"), but assume "Man" was based on the story of the same name in CRYPT 1. —CK

[illegible] you want you can put me in your comic. I always wanted to be a vampire or a zombie. I send you my picture so you know what I look like. But don't show it to anyone else! Please print my (address).

Dominik Zakrzewski — 61-27 56 RD, Maspeth, NY 11378

I looked at your picture—maybe you should try out for ghoul! —CK

I really enjoyed CRYPT #11, the artwork by Joe Orlando in "Madam Bluebeard" was, in my opinion, some of his best. "Return!" was a good story. Wasn't there a story called "Return" in one of your sci-fi comics?

A few things I noticed in this issue: You completely left out all of the greetings, such as "Dear Crypt-Keeper." I guess this was because you received many letters and had to make room. Also, I noticed that you now are publishing at a different place. Please print my address.

Brandon Hendrix — POB 117, Broken Bow, OK 74728

A "Return" was in W SCI 5 (and a "Return Blow" in CRIME 23, a "Round Trip" in W S-F 6, and a complete turnaround ■ "Revolution" in 2FIST 1!). —CK

Whaddaya hear, whaddaya say? I just put down Tales from the Crypt #12, and all I can say is "Wow"! I'm impressed! Again!

"A-Corny Story" had to be my favorite. I don't know why, it wasn't as spooky as the others; maybe because you were the narrator. Crypt!

How about making another EC title that adapts your Saturday morning cartoon? Please? Pretty please? Ugly please? Please print my address (don't give it to Professor van Helsing, though. Ha!) And doubt thee never, "Blood is thicker than water, and tastier, too!"

Tony Martinez — 6041 S California AV, Chicago, IL 60629

I love your comics! My mom isn't too crazy about you, though. I'm a big horror fan. I watch DARK SHADOWS and stuff like that.

[Your] TV shows are okay, but nothing can match the original stories. The movie that was made back in 1972 is dumb. You tell Patrick Burkett that Mike Miller said it was dumb!

I would like to ask you if you could give me some tips for a book I'm writing. It's about 5 strangers that try ■ fight off zombies that are attacking New York City. So far, the book isn't scary.

Could you give me some ideas on how to make my room look like yours?

Mike Miller — Middletown, PA

Sure! Dust your room weekly. I use two buckets of dust. —CK

■ the original "Crypt" movie (1972) what is the title of the story that stars the great Peter Cushing as old Arthur Grimsdyke, and in which issue does it appear in? You may print my address.

Alan Raine — Fern House, 22 Plawsworth RD, Sacriston, Durham, DH7 6PB ENGLAND

According to my notes (made in the dark!), that's "Poetic Justice!" from HAUNT 12. They changed the names to protect the guilty! —CK

I must say, I was overjoyed with this issue of CRYPT. It's the only issue—No! Make that the only *comic* I've ever read all the way through and been totally satisfied with *every single story*! Please print my address. (Ever notice that the Crypt-Keeper's 'mummy' in "Lower Berth" looks just like the HBO Crypt-Keeper with black hair?) Freakingly yours.

Myron James — RR 4 BOX 141, Rockville, ■ 47872

Watch for the "Berth" announcement in our CRYPT 17 (or jump the gun and get GLAD CRYPT 1). —CK

HBO's "Abra Cadaver." That show has changed many of the stories to the point where they have absolutely no resemblance to the original story whatsoever. In some cases, such as "Three's a Crowd," I think that HBO actually improved on the original story. But in other stories it seems like someone's big ego just got in the way of us getting to see a good story. But as far as I know, "Abra" ■ the only story where they changed the title. ■ terms of plot, this story most closely resembles the story "Dead Right" from CRYPT (original EC) 37, which will be your number 21.

Warren Standifird — Sunnyvale, CA

Will there ever be any [HBO "Crypt"] episodes released on video? Due to my unfortunate financial crisis, I was forced to cancel my cable TV. If you print my letter (you have my permission) I will give you my first born child—or a check for five bucks.

Eloise Radke — Gilbert, AZ

I hate to pass up mooks, but I don't know. Readers? —CK

I'm writing this letter ■ regards to your HBO "Crypt" cards. You see, I'm missing card number 25 from my collection. If you have any information on this I would really like to know! Enough about your cards, and more about your comics! They're simply wonderful, just like the old Vault-Keeper's tales! Your covers are great, bright, and full of detail! Jack Davis is the best (at least I think) at drawing you. Al Feldstein ■ great at drawing corpse's faces and bodies! Kamen is still the best I think. Your fan and reader,

Grant Smith, age 11 — Stamford, CT

I think you are an extremely sexy zombie. The only thing I don't understand is that you look different on TV (even sexier!)

One more thing; ALIEN and PUMPKIN HEAD, have nothing on you. I am free for a date anytime, I'm looking for an older man zombie with lots of money. I AM a female so don't get nervous.

Tomorrow ■ Mardi Gras, so "Happy Mardi Gras!" from New Orleans!

C. Delaune, 21 — Marrero, LA

You are a female; that's what makes me nervous! A date in New Orleans would make being a zombie worth it (oh, that seafood!). —CK

IAHF (I also heard from):

Danny Epping	**N Lewisburg, OH**
Jeffrey Jones, Jr. ("print my address")	
4231 Bensalem BLVD	**Bensalem, PA 19020**
Dave Kelly	**Topeka, KS**
Andy Kimble ("print my address")	
210 E Heritage DR	**Minooka, IL 60447**
Nathan (Killer Kid) Lavender	
	address unknown
Jess Lovelace	**Anchorage, AK**
Derek McKearin	**Houston, TX**
Chris (POG) Pelday	**address unknown**
Darren Saldana	**Pueblo, CO**
Jonathan Smith	**Houston, TX**
Derek Steed	**Alliance, OH**
Renee Witte	**Temperance, MI**
Andrea Witting, age 8	**Jamaica, NY**

I am po'd at Taras Berezowsky, who wrote to you guys complaining about CRYPT #10. So what if the ending of your story "Political Pull!" was unrealistic?

Half of your stories are, but they're still good. A true CRYPT fan would bite their lip and stand by their comic knowing that some stories are good and some stories are bad.

It is true that everyone is entitled to their own opinion and *this is mine*. The next time somebody has something bad to say about your guys, they can write to me (please print my address). My friends agree with me and so does my family.

Rosalie Erti — 7 Park ST, Shortsville, NY 14548

Your movie, DEMON NIGHT, kicked butt. I liked the part where he * I saw it the first day it came out, at the movies. Everyone kept on clapping at a cool part. I want to know why it wasn't scary. I thought the movie was funny! I also got HAUNT [#10]. I liked "Bum Steer!" I have a Crypt-Keeper doll and I put a bandana on it so it would look like me.

name unknown — address unknown

*** deleted 'cause it grossed even ME out!**

Why not get a troll doll and put a BANANA on it so it'll look like The Old Witch! —CK

The first thing I do when I get a new issue is look at the letter column, or "Crypt-Keeper's Corner." Tell whoever does the Crypt-Keeper [they are] very funny!! Sometimes I find myself laughing out loud!

By the way in issue #8, what was the size of a bed sheet? A poster? I'm making a comic. I'll send you [a copy]

Joey Dunn — Palm Desert, Ca

Ahem! I do MY OWN lettercolumn, and darn right I'm amusing! In CRYPT 8, I was talking about the tabloid-sized (about 10" by 13") EXTRA-LARGE CRYPT. We still have copies of the only issue, $6 plus the usual s&h. —CK

I don't normally like to read, but I really enjoy reading your chilling tales of terror, along with those of your colleagues, The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch. Even more, I like to watch your TV show. You look better on TV than in your comic. Do you think you'll ever have The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch as guests on your TV show? That would be cool! Your friend,

Matt Jewett — Ravenna, OH

Sure, they can be on my show—when I run a doubleheader! Heh, heh! —CK

NEXT ISSUE

I love CRYPT comics. I get any EC comics I can. I hear there is a new series of HBO CRYPT cards coming out. Did anyone at the EC comics have anything to do with "Demon Knight?" Please print my address so people can write to me. I need someone to talk to in my town! I am ten years old

Pete Annelli — 10 Lambert ST, Washington, NJ 07882

Neh, we don't work on the movie and TV stuff. They succeed or fail on their own. Of course, if they increase interest in the comics... —CK

I like your terror stories, especially the "The Living Corpse" [CRYPT 2]. It was so cool. He strangles him, then he has bad nightmares. In fact I liked the whole book.

Greg Lloyd — Tovela, UT

Er, to be clear, the guy who gets strangled had the bad nightmares. To be fair, that was one of our more disjointed presentations (you'll note I didn't do a personal introduction!). Wood's nightmares saved the story, if you ask me. They're so cool! —CK

PASSED YOUR EYES DEPT.

Did you catch the original EC error intentionally left in this comic? In one of the stories, there is a misplaced 'name' which was not removed after a word balloon was corrected and before the art was added. Heh-heh!

NEXT ISSUE

Also available this month are WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Watch for VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED next month. Don't forget HAUNT, FRONTLINE COMBAT and CRIME. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1 (subject to availability), $3 each. All others up thru issue #3, $1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, $2 each. Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION! Add $5 per order ($10 outside US) for S&H.

Write to:
CRYPT
GEMSTONE
POB 469
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS

TALES FROM THE CRYPT "#29" (#13, APR/MAY 52)

COVER by Jack Davis	
"Grounds... for Horror!"	Jack Davis
"A Rottin' Trick!"	Joe Orlando
"Board to Death!"	Jack Kamen
"A Sucker for a Spider!"	Graham Ingels

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically omitted street address and zip code unless you clearly state you want them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the individual letter.

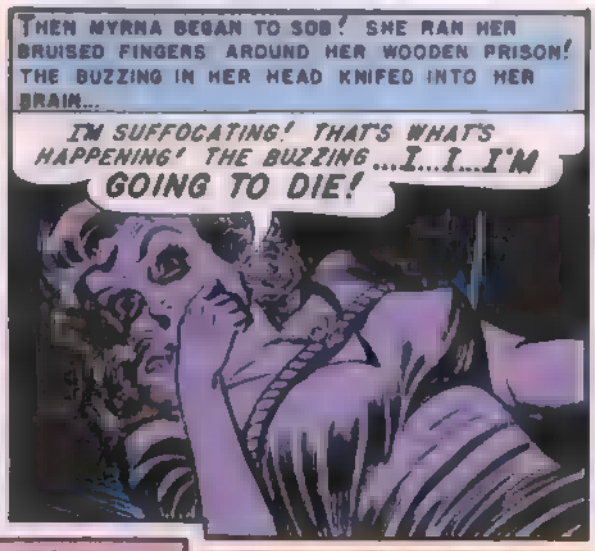
HERE'S THE CHILLING TALE OF A GAL WHO FOUND SHE WAS...

BOARD TO DEATH!

THE BUZZING...THE INCESSANT DRONING...HAMMERED INTO MYRNA'S EARS AS SHE CAME TO! SHE FELT HER HEART POUNDING IN HER CHEST, MATCHING THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CONTINUOUS HUMMING! MYRNA OPENED HER EYES BUT SHE SAW NOTHING! ONLY A VOID OF BLACK FILLED WITH THE EAR-SPLITTING ROAR! SHE FELT DIZZY AND SICK...

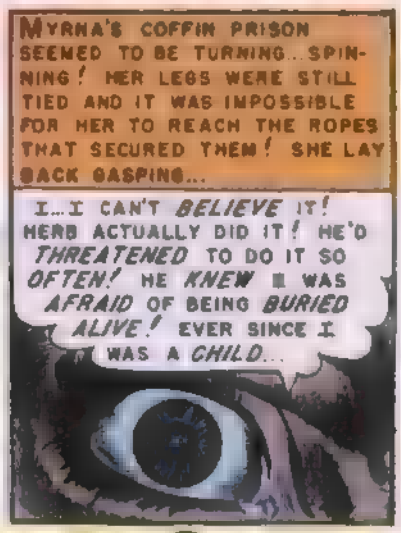
MYRNA TRIED TO MOVE! ACROSS HER CHEST A BAND OF SOMETHING TAUT DUG IN! HER LEGS WERE FASTENED ALSO! MYRNA GASPED! SHE WAS TIED UP! THE HUMMING SOUND CONTINUED! MYRNA MOVED HER HAND! HER HAND WAS FREE! SHE REACHED UP INTO THE DRONING DARKNESS AND TOUCHED SOMETHING... SOMETHING FLAT AND HARD ABOVE HER! FEAR CLUTCHED AT MYRNA'S HEART NOW! SHE REACHED OUT TO HER SIDE AND SCREAMED...

MYRNA LIFTED HER OTHER HAND AND BEAT HER SMALL FISTS ON THE FIRM WALLS AROUND HER! AGAIN SHE SHRIEKED...
OH, LORD...HELP ME! SOMEBODY, HELP ME! HE'S BURIED ME ALIVE!
EEEEEEEEEEEE...


THEN MYRNA BEGAN TO SOB! SHE RAN HER BRUISED FINGERS AROUND HER WOODEN PRISON! THE BUZZING IN HER HEAD KNIFED INTO HER BRAIN...
I'M SUFFOCATING! THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING! THE BUZZING...I...I...I'M GOING TO DIE!

MYRNA REACHED DOWN AND TOUCHED THE HEAVY ROPE THAT CUT INTO HER HEAVING CHEST...
HE...HE TIED ME DOWN! BUT HE FORGOT MY HANDS!

SHE UNDID THE KNOT AND BREATHED HARD AS SHE FLUNG THE ROPES BACK! BUT THE HUMMING SOUND CONTINUED...
I...I'M GETTING DIZZY! I FEEL MYSELF FALLING! HELP! SOMEBODY... PLEASE HELP ME!


MYRNA'S COFFIN PRISON SEEMED TO BE TURNING...SPINNING! HER LEGS WERE STILL TIED AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HER TO REACH THE ROPES THAT SECURED THEM! SHE LAY BACK GASPING...
I...I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HERB ACTUALLY DID IT! HE'D THREATENED TO DO IT SO OFTEN! HE KNEW I WAS AFRAID OF BEING BURIED ALIVE! EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD...

'I REMEMBER THE INCIDENT SO WELL! I WAS PLAYING IN AN OLD ABANDONED MINE! I MUST HAVE JARRED A SHORING POLE LOOSE...BECAUSE THE NEXT THING I KNEW...'
THE ROOF! IT'S CAVING IN! EEEEEEEEEE...

'IT TOOK THEM FOUR HOURS TO DIG THEIR WAY THROUGH TO ME! I CRIED ALL THE WHILE! FINALLY, THE BLACK DIRT FELL AWAY, AND A GRIMY FACE GRINNED AT ME...'
SOB...SOB... SOB... I'M GOING TO DIE!
TAKE IT EASY, KID! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW! WE'VE GOT YOU! YOU'RE SAFE!

'EVER...EVER SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN DEATHLY AFRAID OF BEING BURIED ALIVE! HERB KNEW IT! I TOLD HIM ON OUR FIRST DATE! WE'D GONE TO ONE OF THOSE AMUSEMENT PARKS...'

C'MON, MYRNA! DON'T BE A PRUDE. IT'S THE TUNNEL OF LOVE!

NO, HERB! NO! I'M AFRAID!

TUNNEL OF LOVE

WHAT ARE YOU SCARED OF, MYRNA? IT'S JUST A DARK PLACE WHERE WE CAN...

IT'S SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WAS A KID, HERB! I WAS CAUGHT IN A CAVE-IN! EVER SINCE THEN...

'YES! HERB KNEW! AND LATER... WHEN WE WERE MARRIED... HE USED TO JOKE ABOUT IT...'

IF I DON'T GET A GREAT BIG HUG AND A NICE JUICY KISS THIS VERY MINUTE... I'M GOING TO DIG A HOLE AND PUT YOU IN AND BURY YOU ALI-

HERB! STOP IT!

'HERB NEVER MADE MUCH MONEY AND I WAS PRETTY HARD ON HIM! WE BEGAN TO ARGUE A LOT! THAT'S WHEN HE STARTED TO THREATEN ME...'

LEAVE ME ALONE, MYRNA! I DO THE BEST I CAN! THERE'S JUST NO CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT RIGHT NOW!

LOOK AT ME! I HAVEN'T BOUGHT A NEW DRESS IN MONTHS!

I'LL BUY YOU A NEW DRESS... WHEN I BURY YOU ALIVE!

STOP IT, HERB! STOP TALKING LIKE THAT!

MYRNA GASPED! THE HUMMING WAS LOUDER NOW! SHE FELT A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEP OVER HER... FELT HERSELF SPINNING DIZZILY...

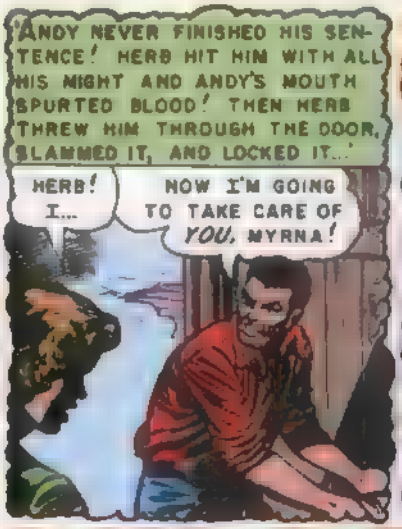
AND HE DID IT! HERB FINALLY DID IT! I'M GOING TO DIE! BURIED ALIVE! HE'S BURIED ME ALIVE LIKE HE BURIED ME IN THAT STINKING MINING TOWN...

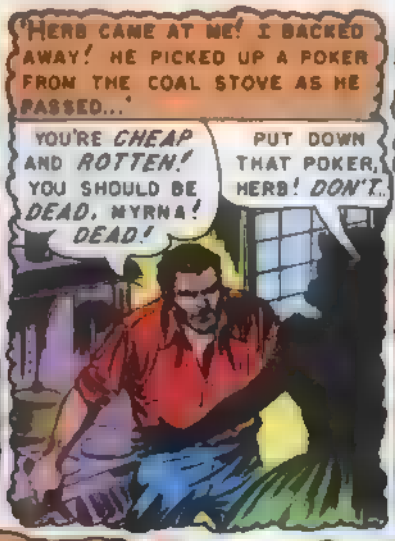
'...HERB TALKED ME INTO MOVING TO THAT ROTTEN HOLE... MILES FROM NOWHERE... AND I FOOLISHLY WENT! HE'D BEEN OFFERED A JOB WITH A CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT! WE HAD TO DRIVE THREE DAYS OVER BAD ROADS TO REACH IT...'

WELL, MYRNA! THIS IS IT! IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT THE PAY IS GOOD, AND IN NO TIME AT ALL...

IT'S HORRIBLE... SOB! HORRIBLE! NOTHING BUT A DIRTY SHANTY TOWN! THAT'S ALL...

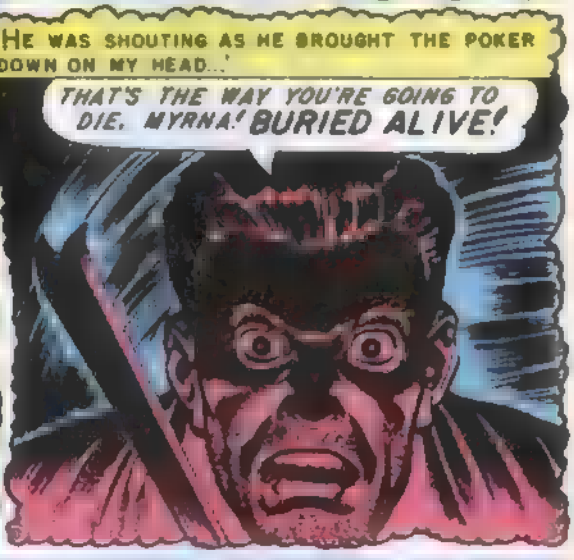
I WAS CRAZY TO HAVE LISTENED TO HIM! BUT I WAS TRAPPED! I HAD TO STAY! EVERY DAY HERB WOULD GO OFF TO THE ORE-PITS AND LEAVE ME IN THAT FILTHY HOVEL I WAS FORCED TO CALL HOME...'
I HATE IT HERE! HATE IT!
AND THEN I MET ANDY! ANDY WORKED WITH HERB! ONE NIGHT, HERB BROUGHT HIM HOME TO DINNER...'
THIS IS MY WIFE MYRNA! HONEY! MEET ANDY CARSON!
HOW DO, MYRNA!
HELLO!
'I DON'T KNOW WHY IT HAPPENED OR HOW IT HAPPENED! PERHAPS I WAS BORED WITH HERB... BORED WITH THE DRAB LIFE I WAS LIVING! ANYWAY, I FELL IN LOVE WITH ANDY CARSON...'
LOOK, MYRNA! THIS IS WRONG! ALL WRONG!
HERB'S AT THE ORE-PITS, ANDY! HE'LL BE GONE TILL MIDNIGHT! KISS ME!
'I SAW ANDY EVERY CHANCE I COULD GET! I'D MAKE SOME EXCUSE AND GO FOR A WALK... AND MEET HIM WHERE WE WOULDN'T BE SEEN...'
WHAT ABOUT HERB, MYRNA? DOES HE SUSPECT?
NOT A BIT! HE'S TOO STUPID... TOO BLIND!
'BUT I WAS MISTAKEN! HERB DID SUSPECT! ONE NIGHT...
I'D BETTER GO, MYRNA! HERB'LL BE COMING OFF HIS SHIFT SOON!
YES! KISS ME GOOD-NIGHT, ANDY DARLING!
'HERB MUST HAVE COME OFF HIS SHIFT EARLY THAT NIGHT, INTENDING TO CATCH US! AS ANDY TOOK ME IN HIS ARMS, THE FRONT DOOR SWUNG OPEN...'
HERB!
TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF HER, CARSON!
'HERB WAS MAD... STEAMING MAD! I TRIED TO SAY SOMETHING...'
WE...WE WERE GOING TO TELL YOU, HERB! WE...
SHUT UP! GET OUT, CARSON! GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!
HOLD ON A MINUTE, HERB! I...

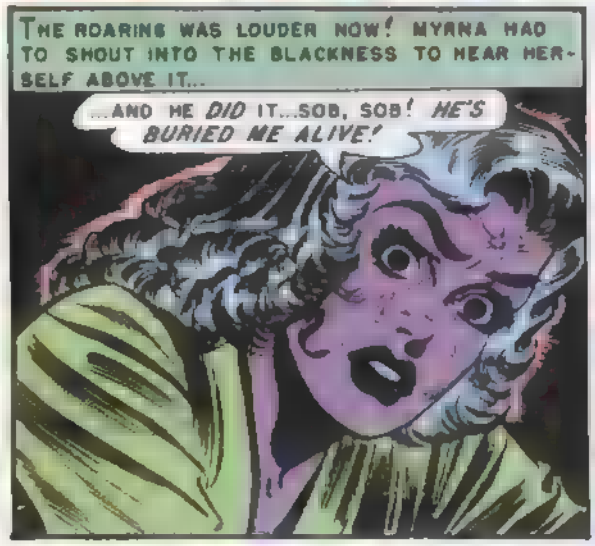

'ANDY NEVER FINISHED HIS SENTENCE! HERB HIT HIM WITH ALL HIS MIGHT AND ANDY'S MOUTH SPURTED BLOOD! THEN HERB THREW HIM THROUGH THE DOOR, SLAMMED IT, AND LOCKED IT...'
HERB! I...
NOW I'M GOING TO TAKE CARE OF YOU, MYRNA!


'HERB CAME AT ME! I BACKED AWAY! HE PICKED UP A POKER FROM THE COAL STOVE AS HE PASSED...'
YOU'RE CHEAP AND ROTTEN! YOU SHOULD BE DEAD, MYRNA! DEAD!
PUT DOWN THAT POKER, HERB! DON'T...

I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU WITH IT, MYRNA! NO! THAT'S TOO SHORT... TO GOOD FOR YOU! I'M JUST GOING TO PUT YOU OUT FOR A WHILE...
PLEASE, HERB! I'M SORRY! I STILL LOVE YOU! PLEASE!

'HE CAME AT ME, GLARING! HE SNARLED MEANLY...'
THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO, MYRNA? I'M GOING TO PUT YOU IN A PINE BOX AND BURY YOU ALIVE! YES! YOU'VE ALWAY BEEN AFRAID OF THAT!
NO! NO, HERB! P-L-EASE... SOB...SOB...


'HE WAS SHOUTING AS HE BROUGHT THE POKER DOWN ON MY HEAD...'
THAT'S THE WAY YOU'RE GOING TO DIE, MYRNA! BURIED ALIVE!


THE ROARING WAS LOUDER NOW! MYRNA HAD TO SHOUT INTO THE BLACKNESS TO HEAR HERSELF ABOVE IT...
...AND HE DID IT...SOB, SOB! HE'S BURIED ME ALIVE!

SHE POUNDED HER RAW AND BLEEDING FISTS AGAINST HER PINE PRISON...SCREAMING...
I'M GOING TO DIE! I'M GOING TO DIE!

MYRNA WAS *CRACKING* NOW! THE TERROR OF THE SITUATION...THE HORROR OF HER IMPENDING DEATH...HER ABNORMAL FEAR OF WHAT SHE NOW ACTUALLY FACED...ALL ADDED UP TO THE BREAKING POINT...

YAAAAAAEEAAGHH!

BACK AT THE MINING TOWN, IN THE SHACK THEY'D CONVERTED TO A JAIL, ANDY AND SEVERAL OTHERS QUESTIONED HERB...

IF SHE *DIES*, HERB, YOU'LL GO ON TRIAL FOR *MURDER!*

I...I COULDN'T *HELP* IT! I SAW *RED!* I HIT HER WITH THE *POKER!*

LUCKY FOR *YOU* THE *MAIL-PLANE* WAS IN, HERB!

YEAH, DOC! I *KNOW!* DO YOU THINK SHE'LL *PULL THROUGH?*

DON'T KNOW FOR *SURE!* IF THEY CAN GET HER TO THE *HOSPITAL AT BUTTE IN TIME*, AN OPERATION COULD SAVE HER!

PRETTY *CLEVER* OF ANDY, EH, DOC?

YOU MEAN *SUGGESTING WE FLY HER DOWN LIKE* THEY *EVACUATE THE WOUNDED* OVER *KOREA?* YEAH! THAT PLANE COULD *NEVER* HOLD A STRETCHER *INSIDE!*

BUT HOOKIN' THAT *BOX* ON THE *OUTSIDE*... *THAT* DID THE *TRICK!*

ON THE AIRFIELD IN BUTTE, A SMALL MAIL-PLANE STANDS QUIETLY! FASTENED TO ITS SIDE A LARGE PINE BOX, SOMEWHAT RESEMBLING A COFFIN! THEY'VE OPENED THE BOX NOW, TO REMOVE MYRNA AND RUSH HER TO THE HOSPITAL! BUT MYRNA DOESN'T SEE THE BLUE SKY ABOVE HER! IN HER MIND, SHE STILL HEARS THE DRONING SOUND...STILL SEES THE BLACKNESS AROUND HER! SHE BEATS HER RAW AND BLOODY FISTS AT THE AIR...

BURIED...ALIVE... BURIED...ALIVE... BUR...BU...B...B...B... EH...EH...EH...EH...

POOR WOMAN! THE BLOW MUST HAVE DAMAGED HER *BRAIN!*

SHE'S COMPLETELY OUT OF HER MIND!

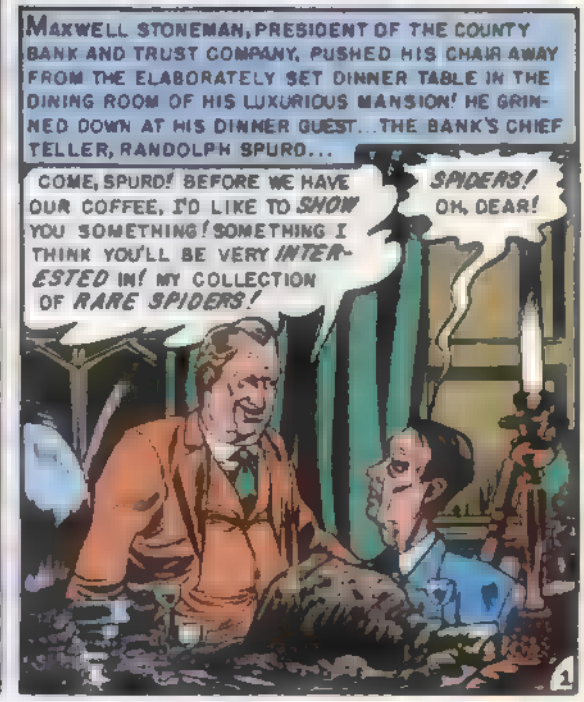
HEH, HEH! YEP! MYRNA'S CRAZY AS A *LOON*, NOW! THEY'VE PUT HER AWAY IN A *PADDED CELL* SO SHE WON'T BREAK HER *FISTS* AS SHE POUNDS THE WALLS! AND *YOU'LL* POUND THE WALLS WHEN YOU GET *MY BLASTED BACK ISSUES!* THEY'RE GOOD READING! READ MY COLUMN, *THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER*, FOR INFO ON HOW TO OBTAIN 'EM! AND NOW I SMELL *THE OLD WITCH'S CAULDRON*...SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO *HER!*

-THE END-

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE,HEE! I'M *COOKIN'* AGAIN! *SMELL* THE *FETID ODOR?* IT'S THE *EVIL BREW* IN MY *CAULDRON!* COME IN! COME INTO THE *HAUNT OF FEAR!* YES ..IT'S YOUR *SHIVER-CHEF, THE OLD WITCH,* READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER *CREEPY CONCOCTION* OF *SLIMY SAMPLINGS!* HEE, HEE! SO DRAW UP CLOSE TO THE FIRE.. *KNEEL* DOWN SO YOUR *KNEES WON'T KNOCK*...FASTEN YOUR *DROOL CUPS* ..TUCK YOUR *SHROUDS* UNDER YOUR CHINS... AND I'LL FEED YOU THE *MORBID MORSEL* OF *MELODRAMATIC MADNESS* I CALL...

A SUCKER FOR A SPIDER!



WEALTHY BANKER STONEMAN LED HIS MEEK LOOKING CHIEF TELLER THROUGH THE RICHLY FURNISHED LIVING ROOM INTO A GLASS-WALLED GREEN-HOUSE
SPIDERS HAVE BEEN MY HOBBY FOR YEARS, SPURD! I'VE SPECIMENS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD!
I...I DIS-LIKE SPIDERS, MR. STONEMAN!
COVERING ONE WALL OF THE GREEN-HOUSE WAS A LINE OF GLASS CASES! EACH CASE CONTAINED A SOIL BOTTOM AND WAS ARTISTICALLY PLANTED WITH FOLIAGE...
I LOVE THEM, SPURD! AN AMAZING CREATURE...THE SPIDER! TAKE THIS ONE FOR EXAMPLE...
UGH! IT GIVES ME THE SHIVERS!
MAX STONEMAN POINTED THROUGH THE FRONT GLASS OF ONE OF THE CASES! INSIDE, A HUGE, HAIRY, EIGHT-LEGGED CREATURE CROUCHED ON A BROAD LEAF...
THIS IS A TARANTULA! I GOT THIS ONE FROM A SEAMAN ON A BANANA BOAT! WHEN IT MATURES, IT WILL MEASURES SIX... MAYBE EIGHT INCHES ACROSS!
IS IT... POISONOUS!
IT CAN STING YOU PRETTY BADLY, BUT ITS BITE ISN'T TOO TOXIC! IT'S ABOUT AS BAD AS A WASP'S BITE! THERE AREN'T MANY SPIDERS WHOSE BITES ARE POISONOUS! THE BLACK WIDOW IS ABOUT THE ONLY SPIDER FOUND IN THE UNITED STATES THAT CAN KILL A MAN!
I'M DEATHLY AFRAID OF SPIDERS, MR. STONEMAN! CAN'T WE...THAT IS... CAN'T WE TALK BUSINESS NOW?
BANKER STONEMAN TOOK HIS CHIEF TELLER BY THE ARM AND LED HIM TO ANOTHER CASE...
LATER, SPURD! FIRST I MUST SHOW YOU THE PRIZE OF MY COLLECTION! HERE... IN THIS CASE! IT'S A VERMULA SPIDER! A VERY RARE VARIETY.
WHAT A LOVELY WEB IT'S SPUN!
MR. STONEMAN REACHED DOWN BELOW THE SPIDER-CASE AND PICKED UP A LARGE JAR COVERED AT THE TOP WITH CHEESECLOTH...
I WANT YOU TO WATCH WHAT THE VERMULA DOES TO ONE OF ITS VICTIMS, SPURD! THIS IS A BOTTLE OF FLIES!
PLEASE, MR. STONEMAN! DON'T...
MAXWELL STONEMAN CAPTURED ONE OF THE IMPRISONED FLIES FROM THE JAR AND HELD IT IN HIS CLOSED FIST! THEN HE OPENED THE SPIDER CASE AND FLUNG THE UNFORTUNATE INSECT INTO THE VERMULA'S WEB...
THERE! HEH, HEH! SEE HOW THE LITTLE FELLOW STICKS THERE!
POOR THING! IT'S STRUGGLING TO FREE ITSELF!
2

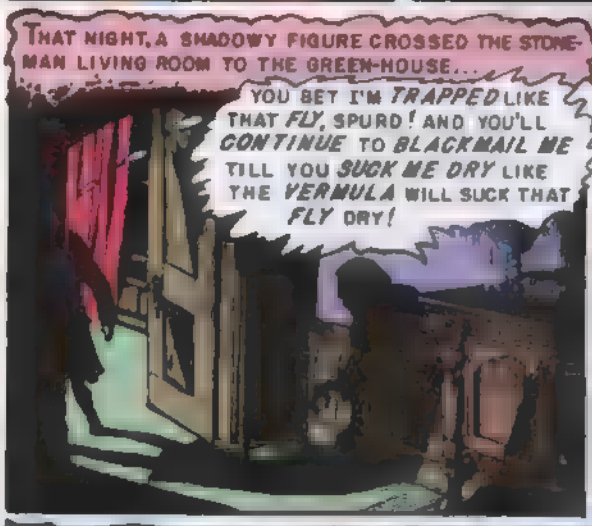
THE TRAPPED FLY TWISTED AND TURNED IN AN EFFORT TO TEAR ITSELF FROM THE WEB...
IT WON'T GET LOOSE, SPURD! THE VERMULA'S WEB IS COVERED WITH A THICK ADHESIVE COATING!
THE SPIDER'S COMING!
YES! NOW...WATCH! SEE HOW THE VERMULA SINKS ITS FANGS INTO THE FLY? IT PARALYZES ITS VICTIM...
OH...DEAR!
THEN IT BEGINS TO SPIN A COVERING AROUND THE FLY! SEE? SEE HOW IT TURNS THE FLY OVER AND OVER, SPINNING ITS WEB AROUND IT LIKE A COCOON?
AND THE FLY? IS IT STILL ALIVE?
EXACTLY! THE VERMULA WILL KEEP THE FLY THAT WAY UNTIL IT IS READY TO EAT IT! AT THAT TIME IT WILL INJECT THE FLY WITH AN ENZYME WHICH ACTS AS A PRE-DIGESTION AGENT! THEN THE SPIDER MERELY SUCKS UP THE LIQUIFIED INSIDES OF THE FLY, LEAVING ONLY A DRY OUTER SHELL, WHICH IT DISCARDS!
UGH! HOW DISGUSTING!
YOU LOOK SHOCKED, SPURD!
I AM, SIR! AND I THINK IT'S SADISTIC AND CRUEL OF YOU TO THROW THOSE POOR FLIES INTO THAT VICIOUS SPIDER'S WEB!
COME, COME, MAN! I'VE GOT THAT VERMULA IN A CASE! IN ITS NATURAL HABITAT IN THE SOUTHERN SWAMPS OF NORTH AMERICA, IT WOULD NORMALLY TRAP FLIES IN ITS WEB!
IT'S REVOLTING!
DON'T BE SILLY, SPURD! THAT'S NATURE! YOU KNOW... DOG EAT DOG! IN THIS CASE IT'S SPIDER EAT FLY! THAT'S THE WAY IT SURVIVES! AND WE ALL STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE! WE'VE ALL GOT TO BE LIKE THAT SPIDER...IN A WAY!
PERHAPS... PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, SIR! I...I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY! H'MMM!

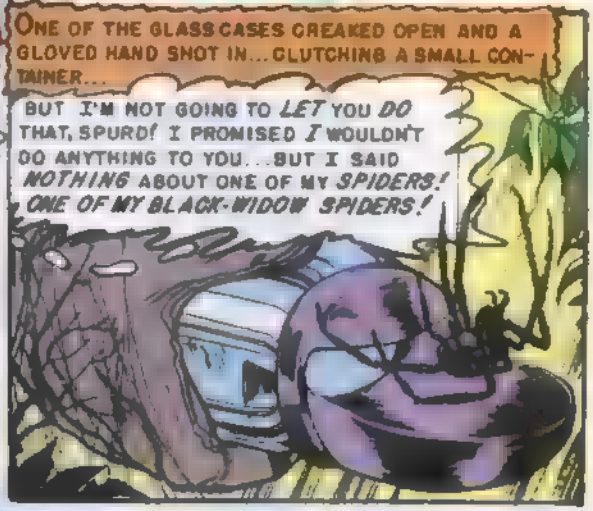
RANDOLPH SPURD FOLLOWED HIS EMPLOYER OUT OF THE GREENHOUSE INTO THE LUXURIOUS LIVING ROOM...
ALL RIGHT, SPURD! WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? YOU INVITED YOURSELF HERE TONIGHT! WHAT'S UP?
WELL, SIR! I... I'VE NOTICED SOMETHING WRONG AT THE BANK... SOMETHING TERRIBLY WRONG!
OH? IT'S THE BOOKS, SIR! THEY DON'T BALANCE! IN FACT... I WOULD SAY SOMEONE IS... ER... STEALING FROM THE BANK, SIR! I CAME HERE TONIGHT TO... ER... WARN YOU! YOU SEE... I KNOW WHO THAT SOMEONE IS!
YOU... YOU DO?
YES, MR. STONEMAN! WHEN I FIRST CAME TONIGHT, I INTENDED TO LET YOU KNOW I KNEW ABOUT THE DISCREPANCY IN THE BOOKS SO THAT YOU COULD REPLACE THE MONEY AND NOTHING MORE WOULD BE SAID!
ARE YOU ACCUSING ME, SPURD?
...BUT, AFTER HEARING YOUR TALK TONIGHT... ABOUT SPIDER EAT FLY... DOG EAT DOG... I'VE DECIDED TO FORGET THAT I NOTICED ANYTHING WRONG...
OH?
...FOR, SAY... FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS! THAT ISN'T MUCH, MR. STONEMAN, COMPARED TO FIFTY-TWO THOUSAND!
SO... IT'S BLACKMAIL, IS IT? YOU WANT A PAYOFF, EH?
LET US CALL IT A STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE, SIR! YOU PAY ME... AND YOU SURVIVE! LIKE YOU SAID, SIR... IT'S NATURE!
THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE, AND THEN MAXWELL STONEMAN BEGAN TO LAUGH! HIS ROARS OF MIRTH ECHOED THROUGH THE HUGE HOUSE...
HEH... HEH! ALL RIGHT, SPURD! YOU WIN! I'M PROUD OF YOU! I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD IT IN YOU! FIVE GRAND, EH? IT'S A DEAL!
AND EVERYTHING STAYS EXACTLY AS IT WAS! I KEEP MY JOB! THAT'S IN THE DEAL, TOO!

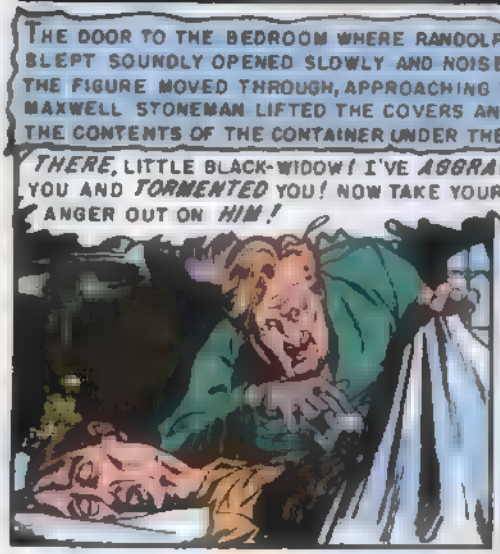
OF COURSE, SPURD! OF COURSE! NO HARD FEELINGS! I'M TRAPPED...LIKE THAT FLY! YOU'VE WON!
GOOD! THEN I'LL BE GOING!

DON'T BE SILLY! YOU'LL STAY THE NIGHT! WE'LL DRIVE IN TOGETHER IN THE MORNING! NO USE GOING NOW! IT'S SO LATE!
I DON'T KNOW...

DON'T WORRY, SPURD! I'M NOT GOING TO TRY ANYTHING! I'D BE A FOOL!
YES, MR. STONEMAN! YOU WOULD BE! ALL RIGHT! I'LL STAY!


THAT NIGHT, A SHADOWY FIGURE CROSSED THE STONEMAN LIVING ROOM TO THE GREEN-HOUSE...
YOU BET I'M TRAPPED LIKE THAT FLY, SPURD! AND YOU'LL CONTINUE TO BLACKMAIL ME TILL YOU SUCK ME DRY LIKE THE VERMULA WILL SUCK THAT FLY DRY!


ONE OF THE GLASS CASES CREAKED OPEN AND A GLOVED HAND SHOT IN...CLUTCHING A SMALL CONTAINER...
BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU DO THAT, SPURD! I PROMISED I WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU...BUT I SAID NOTHING ABOUT ONE OF MY SPIDERS! ONE OF MY BLACK-WIDOW SPIDERS!


THE DOOR TO THE BEDROOM WHERE RANDOLPH SPURD SLEPT SOUNDLY OPENED SLOWLY AND NOISELESSLY! THE FIGURE MOVED THROUGH, APPROACHING THE BED! MAXWELL STONEMAN LIFTED THE COVERS AND EMPTIED THE CONTENTS OF THE CONTAINER UNDER THEM...
THERE, LITTLE BLACK-WIDOW! I'VE AGGRAVTITED YOU AND TORMENTED YOU! NOW TAKE YOUR ANGER OUT ON HIM!

AS BANKER STONEMAN SLIPPED OUT INTO THE HALL AND CLOSED THE BED-ROOM DOOR, AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM ECHOED THROUGH THE MANSION...
EEEEAAAGH!
HEH... HEH!

THE NEXT MORNING, THE POLICE CAME AN ANSWER TO MAXWELL STONEMAN'S 'FRANTIC' PHONECALL! THEY QUESTIONED MAX ABOUT RANDOLPH SPURO'S UNFORTUNATE DEATH! MAX WAS 'HEARTBROKEN'...

THE DOC SAYS A BLACK-WIDOW KILLED HIM, MR. STONEMAN! HAVE YOU ANY IDEA HOW THE SPIDER GOT OUT OF ITS CASE?

NO! I *SHOWED* MR. SPURO *MY COLLECTION* LAST NIGHT! PERHAPS THE *CASE DOOR WAS LEFT OPEN!*

THE POLICE INSPECTOR HAMMERED AWAY, BUT COULD PROVE NOTHING...

I INVITED HIM TO MY HOUSE *SOCIALLY!* I DO THAT *OFTEN* FOR MY EMPLOYEES! I LIKE TO MAKE THEM FEEL I AM THEIR *FRIEND* AS *WELL* AS THEIR *EMPLOYER!*

OKAY, MR. STONEMAN! THAT'LL BE ALL! *WRAP IT UP,* BOYS! JUST AN *ACCIDENT! THAT'S ALL!*

BUT MAXWELL STONEMAN DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY THE POLICE INSPECTOR EYED HIM! MAX DECIDED IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO GET OUT OF THE STATE FOR A FEW MONTHS TILL THE INCIDENT WAS FORGOTTEN...

YOUR PLANE IS READY, MR. STONEMAN! GOING SOUTH?

YES, GEORGE! GOING TO MIAMI FOR A FEW MONTHS!

MR. STONEMAN OWNED HIS OWN PLANE! HE WAS AN EXPERT PILOT, FLYING IT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR BUSINESS AND PLEASURE! THE NEXT DAY, HIGH OVER GEORGIA...

OUGHT TO BE IN MIAMI IN *TWO HOURS!* THAT'S THE *OKEFENOKEE SWAMP* DOWN THERE NOW! I...I...

SUDDENLY, THE ENGINE SPUTTERED AND DIED! THE PLANE BEGAN TO LOOSE ALTITUDE...

GOOD LORD! THE ENGINE'S CONKED OUT! I'M GOING DOWN!

MAX TUMBLED OUT OF THE TINY PLANE'S DOOR AS IT WENT INTO A SPIN! HIS CHUTE MUSHROOMED OPEN AND HE BEGAN TO FLOAT LAZILY TOWARD THE FOREBODING SWAMP BELOW...

NOT A *SIGN OF A ROAD OR A CABIN!* I'M RIGHT OVER THE *WORST SECTION* OF THE *OKEFENOKEE*...THE PART THAT *NO MAN IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO FIND HIS WAY OUT OF!*

MAX DROPPED INTO A THICKLY OVERGROWN SPOT! HIS CHUTE SNARLED IN A MOSS-LADEN CYPRESS TREE AND HE HUNG HELPLESSLY, DANGLING ABOVE THE STAGNANT FOUL-SMELLING WATER...

I'VE...GOT...TO...CUT MYSELF LOOSE! THANK GOODNESS I HAVE A KNIFE!

BANKER STONEMAN HACKED AWAY AT THE CHUTE CORDS UNTIL HE CUT HIMSELF FREE! HE PLUNGED DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SWAMP SURFACE! SUDDENLY...
WHAT THE...? I'VE FALLEN INTO SOMETHING!
MAX LOOKED AROUND! HE SEEMED TO BE LYING UPON SOME SORT OF HUGE NET! HE STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF...
THE NET! IT'S ALL STICKY! IT...IT'S LIKE A... A HUGE SPIDER WEB!
THE MORE MAXWELL STONEMAN TRIED TO ESCAPE, THE MORE HOPELESSLY ENTANGLED HE BECAME! SUDDENLY A MOVEMENT CAUGHT MAX'S EYE! A HUGE HAIRY SHAPE LOOMED UP BEFORE HIM...
OH, NO! NO! A VERMULA SPIDER!
HE-E-E-L-P-P!
THE DISGUSTING THING SPRANG AT MAX, BURYING ITS DRIPPING FANGS IN HIS CHEST! HE FELT A KNIFING CHILL CREEP OVER HIS BODY! THEN THE GIGANTIC SPIDER BEGAN TO COVER HIM WITH ITS MILKY WHITE SPINNINGS...
I...I'M PARALYZED! I CAN'T MOVE! THE VERMULA! IT'S... IT'S WEAVING ITS COCOON AROUND ME!
WHEN THE WRECKAGE OF BANKER STONEMAN'S PLANE WAS SPOTTED BY AN AIRLINE PILOT DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP, HELICOPTERS BROUGHT A SEARCHING PARTY IN! THEY FINALLY FOUND HIM ...OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM...
HE...HE SEEMS TO BE COVERED WITH SOME SORT OF SILKY WHITE STUFF!
PROBABLY WHAT'S LEFT OF HIS CHUTE!
HE'S NOTHING BUT A DRIED-UP SHELL! ALL OF HIS FLESH AND GUTS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SUCKED OUT OF HIS BODY...
ANTS!
ANTS, NUTHIN'! HEE, HEE! MAXEY YELLED UNCLE BEFORE THAT SPIDER GOT THROUGH WITH HIM! WHAT? YOU DOUBT THAT A VERMULA SPIDER THAT SIZE EXISTS IN THE OKEFENOKEE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A TRIP DOWN THERE WITH ME SOMETIME... AND SEE? HEE, HEE! I'LL LET YOU TALK TO AN OLD GUIDE DOWN THERE! HE'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THE TIME HE WAS OUT HUNTING DUCK AND SPIED 'ER! 'BYE, NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THAT RAG, THE VAULT OF HORROR!

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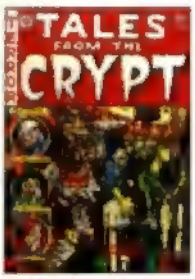
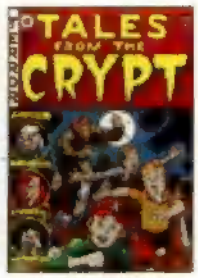


GLAD CRYPT #1

GLAD CRYPT #2



GLAD CRYPT #3

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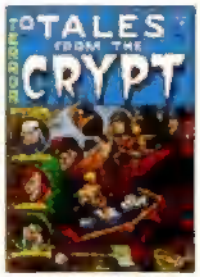


GLAD CRYPT #6

GLAD VAULT #1

GLAD VAULT #2

GLAD VAULT #3

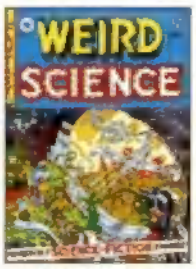
GLAD VAULT #4

GLAD VAULT #5

GLAD VAULT #6

GLAD WEIRD #1

GLAD WEIRD #2



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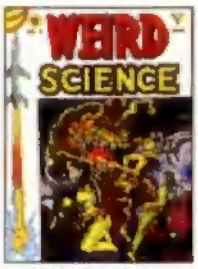

GLAD WEIRD #4

GLAD HAUNT #1

GLAD HAUNT #2

CONTENTS OF GLADSTONE EC COMICS

GLAD CRYPT

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
CRYPT 33 (1952) CRIME 17 (1953)	CRYPT 35 (1953) CRIME 18 (1951)	CRYPT 39 (1953) CRIME 1 (1950)	CRYPT 18 (1950) CRIME 16 (1953)	CRYPT 45 (1954) CRIME 5 (1951)	CRYPT 42 (1954) CRIME 27 (1955)

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#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
VAULT 34 (1953) HAUNT 1 (1950)	VAULT 27 (1952) HAUNT 16 (1953)	HAUNT 22 (1953) VAULT 13 (1950)	VAULT 23 (1952) HAUNT 13 (1952)	VAULT 19 (1951) W FAN 8 (1951)	VAULT 32 (1953) W FAN 6 (1951)

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